IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend paragraph [0048] as follows:

The supporting portion 61 of each supporting member 55 has a tapered portion 68 formed at ~~its~~ a linear distal end portion thereof. The tapered portion 68 is inclined rearward with respect to the rotation direction of the blower 40 as shown by an arrow. The throwing-up blade 56 is removably mounted in the vicinity of the proximal end of the tapered portion 68 with the bolts 57,57 and the nuts 58, 58.

Please amend paragraph [0068] as follows:

Referring to FIG. 5C, the throwing-up blade 56 is elastically deformed rearward, abutting on the tapered portion 68. More specifically, the throwing-up blade 56 elastically bends only about the proximal end portion ~~thereon~~ thereof while the blade body 72 does not bend but rather pivots rearwardly, free from deformation, about the proximal end portion until the blade body contacts the linear distal end portion of the tapered portion 68. As a result, the clearance S1 between the blower 40 and the inside peripheral surface 37a (see FIG. 5B) is changed to a clearance S2 which is larger than the foreign matter 80.

Please amend paragraph [0084] as follows:

The blower 90 according to the second embodiment shown in FIG. 6 includes a plurality of supporting members 91 (three in the embodiment) radially mounted on a drive shaft 38 for rotating the blower 90. An elastically deformable throwing-up blade 56 is mounted to each of the supporting members 91. Like the supporting members 55 in the first embodiment, each supporting member 91 has a tapered portion 96 formed at a linear distal end portion of a supporting portion 101. The tapered portion 96 is inclined in a direction (rearward) opposite to the direction of rotation (arrow direction) of the blower 90. A vacant space 60 is thus formed between the throwing-up blade 56 and the 10 tapered portion 96. The vacant space 60 allows elastic deformation of the throwing-up blade 56 in a direction opposite to the rotation direction.